

along different optical paths before they are incident upon the polarizing beam splitting apparatus.

The relevant drawings from Riza are attached. In Figs. 3a and 3b, input beam 1, coming from the left side of the drawing, enters beam-displacing prism BDP1 (also labelled 28), and is split into two beam components of different polarization, which are clearly following different optical paths, labelled 30 and 32. This occurs before the beam components reach the polarizing beam splitting surface PBS, also labelled 36. Similarly, input beam 2, coming from the right side of the drawing, enters beam-displacing prism BDP2 (also labelled 28), and is split into two beam components of different polarization, following different optical paths, labelled 30 and 32, before reaching the other polarizing beam splitting surface PBS, also labelled 36. Even if it were not obvious from the drawing that the beam components are following different optical paths, this is stated explicitly in the text of Riza, in column 4, lines 62-64, which says "In each module, light passes first through a beam-displacing prism (BDP) 28 and is spatially split into two orthogonally polarized beams 30 and 32...".

In Figs. 4a and 4b, input beams 1 and 2 each emerge from the left side of the drawing, and pass through a beam-displacing prism BDP, where each input beam is split into two beam components of different polarization, following different optical paths, before reaching the polarizing beam splitting surface PBS.

It is true that, in all of these drawings, there are places where the two beam components travel in opposite directions along the same path, but this occurs only after the beam components reach the polarizing beam splitting surface.

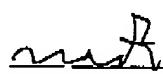
Claims 3, 7, 8 and 13-15 stand objected to as being dependent on rejected base claims 2 and 6. Since the rejections of claims 2 and 6 should be overcome for the reasons given above, then the objections to claims 3, 7, 8 and 13-15 are moot.

For the reasons given, the applicant believes that the application, including the amended abstract, is in condition for allowance. The applicant respectfully requests a telephone conference, if the Examiner is not satisfied that all of his objections have been overcome. Our toll-free U.S. phone number is 1 877 428-5468. Please note that Israel is 7 hours ahead of Washington.

In addition, applicants respectfully point out that a 3<sup>rd</sup> Supplementary Information Disclosure Statement was filed on May 7, 2003, and the PTO-1449 form was not returned to us initialed by the Examiner. Applicants are resubmitting the form and respectfully request that the items listed thereon be initialed by the Examiner to ensure that they appear 5 on the face of the patent issuing on the present application. Applicants assume that the art has already been considered by the Examiner in accordance with MPEP 609.

Respectfully submitted,

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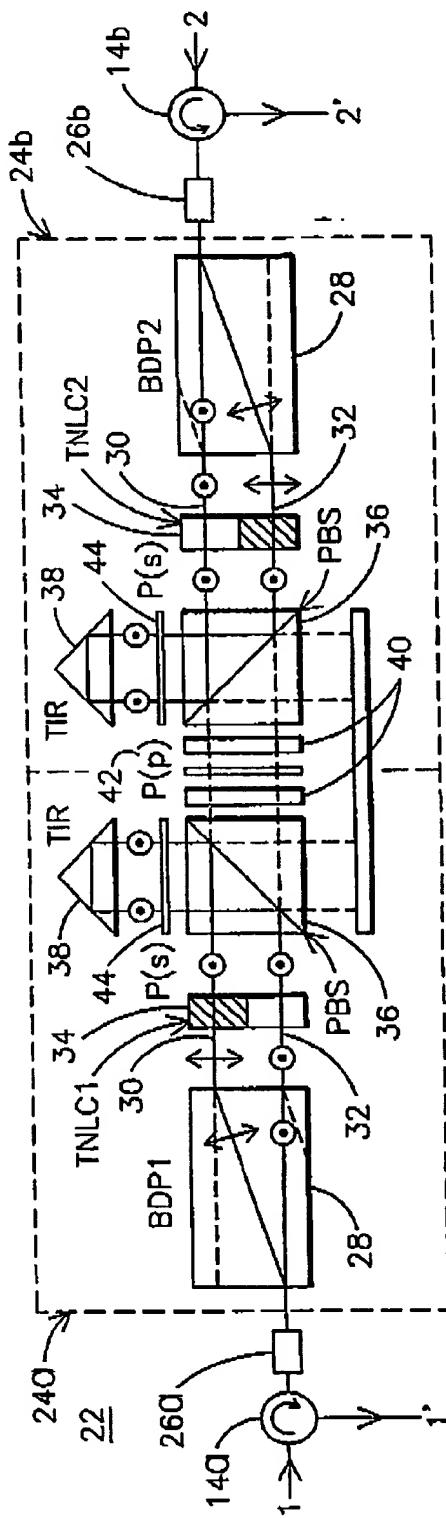


FIG. 3a

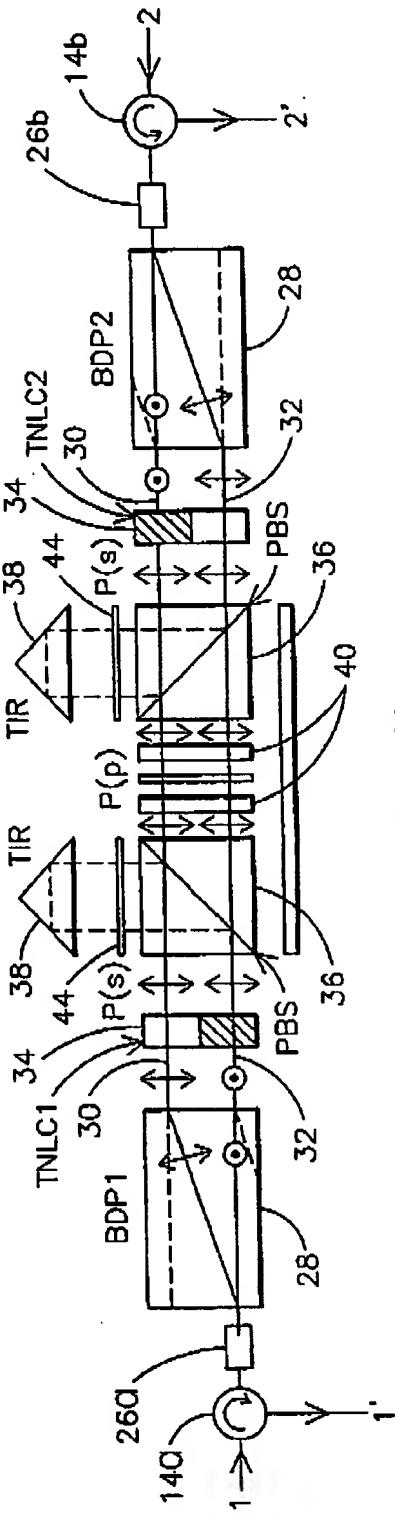
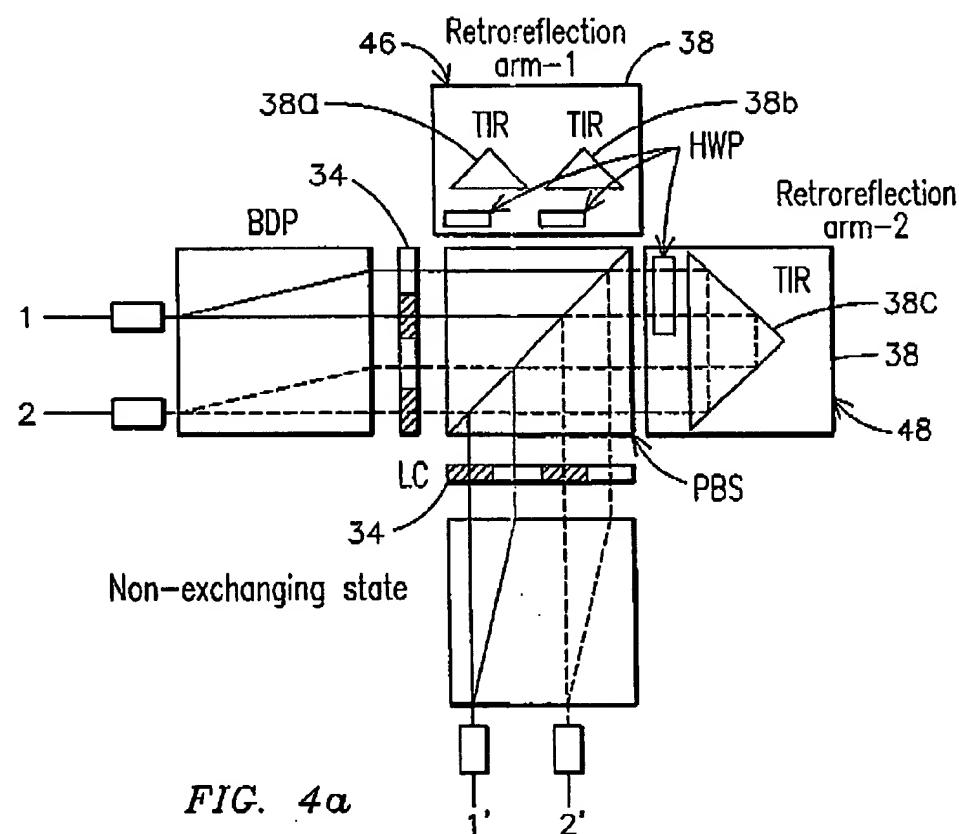


FIG. 3b



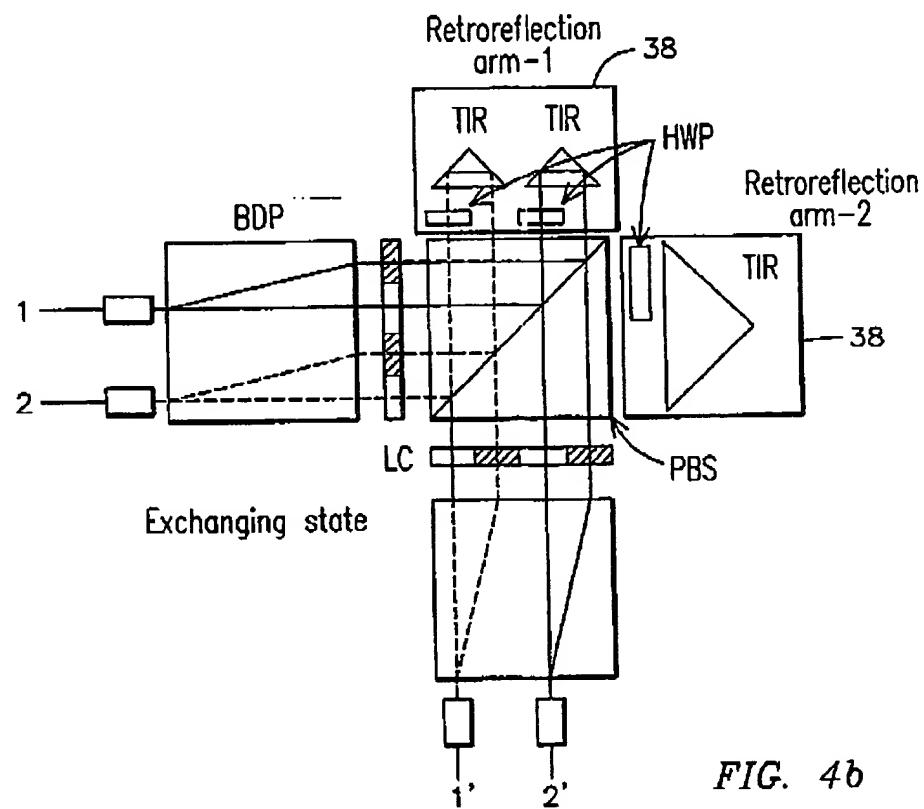


FIG. 4b